



PROCEDURES FOR OPERATING THE ORGANIZATION FOR COOPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT (OECD) SEED SCHEMES IN THE UNITED STATES

Introduction

The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Seed Schemes for the varietal certification of seed moving internationally promotes the use of agricultural seed of consistently high quality. Certified seeds are produced and officially controlled according to common procedures in 52 participating countries. They are identified by OECD labels that are recognized worldwide. Participation in the OECD Seed Schemes is voluntary; however, if a country chooses to participate, it is required to apply the rules and directions in their entirety.

These agreed principles are embodied in the Rules and Directions of the Schemes. The Rules and Directions include detailed requirements for acceptance criteria for varieties, categories of seed for certification, standards for seed production and labeling. Seed moving in international trade is facilitated by the internationally-accepted criteria for certification of varieties of the OECD Seed Schemes. The OECD Seed Schemes pertain to seven groups of agricultural crops. The U. S. currently participates in: 1. Grasses and Legumes, 2. Crucifers and other Oil or Fiber species, 3. Cereals, 4. Fodder Beets and Sugar Beets, 5. Maize and Sorghum, (but not in Subterranean Clover and Vegetables).

The Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) of the Department of Agriculture has been assigned the responsibility of implementing the OECD Seed Schemes in the United States in cooperation with official Seed Certifying Agencies (SCA). The following guidelines have been developed to aid SCA in carrying out their responsibilities:

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1. The legal seed certification authority in any State may participate in the OECD Seed Schemes upon entering into a Cooperative Agreement with AMS. Under the terms of the Cooperative Agreement, the SCAs accept the responsibility of determining that seed produced complies with the rules.

2. The Livestock and Seed Program, Seed Regulatory and Testing Branch in Gastonia, NC, will represent AMS as the U.S. Designated Authority. The OECD Program manager will operate at this location.
3. The categories (classes) of seed recognized under the OECD Seed Schemes are: Pre-Basic Seed, Basic Seed, First Generation Certified Seed, and Second or Successive Generation Certified Seed. Listed below are the seed classes in the United States with the comparable OECD seed categories and labels:

U.S. SEED CLASSES	OECD SEED CLASSES	OECD LABEL COLOR
Breeder Seed	Pre-Basic	White with diagonal violet stripe
Foundation Seed	Basic Seed	White
Certified Seed which is the First Generation increase from Foundation or Registered Seed	First Generation Certified Seed	Blue
---	Second or Successive Generation Certified Seed	Red
---	Not finally Certified	Gray

4. Cultivars bred or selected in the United States will be eligible for certification under the OECD Seed Schemes if acceptance into the State seed certification program is in accordance with approved procedures and the cultivars are included on the OECD list of approved cultivars for certification.
5. Requests for additions, deletions, and changes to the U.S. Cultivars Eligible for OECD Certification are made through these steps:
 - a. Requests are submitted by requesting company or maintainer to the SCA. The request form is available on the Seed Regulatory and Testing Branch OECD Web site: <http://www.ams.usda.gov/lsg/seed.htm>
 - b. After review and approve that the variety is eligible the SCA forwards the approved request form to the OECD Program Manager by e-mail attachment or fax. The SCA should make sure that the Names and Synonyms are not in use. This is made by checking the US Grin System at: <http://www.ars-grin.gov/cgi-bin/npgs/elgin/BrowseOECD.pl>

and the International data base at:

<http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/25/39/21648351.PDF>

- c. The OECD Program Manager will make the change to the Grin database usually within 48 hours. If there is a high priority please call the Program Manager to expedite the priority.
- d. Annually the Program Manager sends all US changes that have been made during the year to the OECD Paris office for changes to the International database.
6. Foreign varieties must be on the list of Cultivars Eligible for OECD Certification before they can be certified under the OECD Seed Schemes.
7. The OECD Program manager, representing the U.S. Designated Authority, must clear with the Designated Authority in the originating country each seed lot of planting stock seed entered for certification under the OECD Seed Schemes.
8. The SCA should supply the following information to the OECD Program manager when requesting clearance of planting stock of a foreign cultivar under the OECD rules:
 - a. The variety name and species,
 - b. The name and address of the U.S. seed firm making the increase,
 - c. The name and address of the foreign firm contracting production of the seed in the United States,
 - d. Breeder's name and address, and
 - e. The category, quantity, and reference number of each lot of planting stock.
9. The OECD Program manager will request approval from the Designated Authority in the originating country for specific lots of planting stock of a foreign variety for increase in the United States. The OECD Program manager will indicate the class of seed for labeling the progeny of these seed lots under the OECD Seed Schemes.
10. Lot enrollment should only be when lots are intended for international shipment and begins when information is submitted pertaining to the issuing of OECD tags. This information should be submitted at least biweekly according to the procedures in the OECD User Specification Guide.

11. Lots will be considered “in the program” at the time tags are issued and lots are finally approved.
12. Certificates can only be submitted once a lot is fully enrolled. Each lot designated for export should have a Certificate. If necessary multiple Certificates may be issued referring to a single lot.
13. Post control procedures are detailed in the International OECD Seed Schemes guidelines and should be followed by the SCA for the appropriate crop. Post control procedures are based on the minimum levels of checks required and frequency of failures for certified seed from the previous year. Results of these Post control tests will be included in the annual reports to the Program manager.
14. The SCA will collect the assessed fees from the seed companies and forward to AMS at least quarterly. The bills for these fees sent by the SCAs, will include the weight of the product tagged, the customer, reference number, and the billing rate. These totals will be based on the biweekly information reported by the SCAs.
15. Invoices will be sent out by the Program office on the closest billing date to October 1, January 1, April 1, and July 1. (With the Program transfer to the AMS the first bill by AMS will be January 1, 2005.)
16. Official records for the OECD Seed Schemes are maintained no less than 5 years after a certificate is issued. Official records would include those required for state and federal laws and information regarding lot size, certificates issued, and quantities shipped. These records may be electronic and/or hard copy.
17. If certificates need to be voided, approval must be obtained from the OECD Program manager by written authorization.
18. If an error occurs while using the Web interface:
 - If an error occurs during the login process, check to make sure the user is approved by AMS.
 - Check the on-screen error message, correct the error, and resubmit. The error field will be highlighted in red
 - If errors still occur, contact the OECD Program manager.
19. If an error occurs while using the Batch process:



- Check the email address and ensure the data file is coming from an approved source.
 - Check the file layout and data format.
 - The SCA will be notified of the error via email. The SCA will correct the error and resubmit.
 - If errors still occur, contact the OECD Program manager.
20. Contact the OECD Program manager if additional users are added or there is a change the email addresses.
21. Carry over seed entered into the program prior to October 1, 2004 will be billed based on the closing date. If that date is prior to October 1, 2004, the previous rate will be assessed. If that date occurs on or after October 1, 2004, the new rates will be assessed.
22. No refunds will be given by AMS/OECD on tags or certificates issued and not used.
23. Year end reports to OECD Program Office will continue as they have in the past. The OECD Program manager will compile the data received from the SCAs and forward this information to the OECD Secretariat. Summaries of the annual report will be forwarded to the SCAs.

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www.ams.usda.gov/lsg/seed.htm